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into the fire. The recipient would cry out, "I win that!" A host gave presents with an eye to what he had already received, the more elaborate objects being presented to people who had given him good gifts in the past. A person who had given poorly received a relatively less valuable present.

When the gifts had all been allocated, a rawhide curtain was erected in the dwelling, supported from two poles held by members of the host's moiety. Members of the potlatcher's group retired behind the curtain and decorated themselves with masks, feathers, and animal skins for dancing.[8] Members of the opposite moiety painted the faces of like-sexed dancers. Costumes did not include ceremonial wigs or aprons. When they were ready the dancers called for the curtain to be removed and began dancing to the rhythm of drums and potlatch songs. After one moiety had performed the guests allowed their faces to be painted and in turn also danced. Crow dancers sometimes ran their hands upward along the faces of the Wolf people, brushing the latter's hair away from the face. Celebrations lasted as long as four days, large meals being served every evening. In the night people gambled far into the morning. Competitive grease-drinking contests were also featured at potlatches, winners receiving their rewards in arrows and other useful prizes. Besides marking puberty, marriage, and anniversaries of death, potlatches constituted a ritual means of reducing hostility between moieties. Thus if a member of the Crow side had killed a Wolf he might avoid the open resentment of the other moiety by assembling wealth and inviting members of the offended side to attend his potlatch. The exchange of ceremonial civilities between the two parties erased all memory of the offense.

Dease River Kaska. Averaging about 15 or 16 inches in diameter, the tambourine drum of semi-tanned moose hide furnished the chief musical instrument of the Kistagotena. Only shamans decorated these objects with symbols representing the sky, moon, and stars. Along with the drum people provided rhythm with bells, made from hollowed caribou horn, or moose hooves threaded on a piece of line from which they could be swung. For amusement youths made willow whistles in the spring. Apart from potlatch chants and songs for gambling, love, and mourning, people sang to secure good weather and favorable hunting and fishing. Hunters knew specific, and presumably lucky, moose, ground hog, caribou, and beaver songs. All chants were generally wordless and in essence consisted of a few syllables repeated over and over in a minor key. The refrain of a potlatch song follows:

ha-ʾə ha-ʾə ɬ-ʾə
ha-ʾə hi-ɬ ho-ho-ʾə
ha we hi- e-ʾə

Songs might be revealed in dreams or learned from one's father. People did not sing war songs.

Dancing provided a popular source of amusement. Sometimes the son of a headman led dancers in a circle while pounding a drum. During the potlatch people performed and clowned while covered with bark masks, the features of which were outlined with char-

[8] At the Tlingit potlatch animal masks and skins were worn to represent the crest animals. Swanton, *Social Conditions, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 433.

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from beating to killing. Injuries inflicted in quarrels demanded settlement by payment. To avoid blood vengeance in the event of murder the murder's family might accumulate many valuables, like skins, robes, and clothing, for presentation to the victim's kin. Even intertribal wars with the Tahltan could sometimes be avoided by offering valuables. A cannibal found himself banished from the community for as long as two years. Ostracism also greeted a couple guilty of incest, an offense covering sexual relations between members of a common moiety. Magical retribution further promised to hasten the death of such people.[45] A folk tale explains that men were likely to find their sisters sexually attractive because of an incident that had occurred very long ago. There once lived a man who left his two wives (they were sisters) and his children, killed his brother-in-law, and copulated with his widowed sister. The deserted wives killed the incestuous couple with the approval of the husband's brother, who said, "My brother did evil and acted like a dog."[46] An adulterous wife suffered a beating but a man had to be careful not to inflict serious injury or his behavior would constitute a crime punishable by the parents-in-law, who might demand an indemnity. A woman could divorce a philandering husband. The extent to which marital jealousy was developed is suggested in the tale of "The Deserted Woman."[47] A woman became suspected of infidelity because she offered her husband grease that she had found. The man, believing that the grease represented payment from a lover, burned his wife's clothing and tools and deserted her, expecting that she would die of cold and starvation. She managed to survive until two brothers discovered and married her. Subsequently she refused to return to her cruel husband. Illegitimacy disgraced both a mother and, later, the child.

Intergroup attitudes are reflected in the Nakani fear. The term designates a "bad Indian," who is given to lurking in the bush so he waits for an opportunity to steal girls. Victims of such an attack were never recovered but were taken to the abductor's tribe to become his wives. Dease River informants asserted as confidently as upper Liard River speakers that a Nakani represented a flesh and blood Indian rather than a supernatural being. The chronic insecurity marking intertribal relations sometimes exploded into war, resentment over encroachment of territories by foreigners being a common motive for fighting.[48] Many engagements were recalled between the Kaska and Tahltan. Ideally the fighting began when an enemy party raided a Kaska encampment, stealing women and killing the men. Inevitably relatives or friends discovered the crime and

[45] George Adsit reported that the Tahltan punished incest by death. On one occasion a guilty couple fled from their band and ascended a small caiion creek. There, surrounded by an abundance of food, they raised two children before their people discovered them and killed the whole family.

[46] Teit, *Kaska Tales* (1917), 439-440.

[47] Teit, *Kaska Tales* (1917), 455-457.

[48] Morice speaks of feuds over hunting grounds dividing the Tahltan and Kaska. (Morice, *Babine and Their Language* [1900-1903], 338.) The entry of white trappers into the Cassiar also met with resentment. "The Cassa Indians have the greatest objection to white men trapping on their own account in their country; gold dust they can take as much as they like, but the fur is the Indian's equivalent for gold and must be left for the Indian. They are very firm on this point—so much so that a couple of white men who were trapping on the Liard some years ago were killed by the Indians because they refused to let the fur alone." Pike, *Through the Subarctic Forest* (1896), 112.